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THE MONTHLY GULL BULLETIN

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Lake Merritt Waterfowl Refuge, 1870-1970.

Harold Winder-Oakland Park Dept. photo

LAKE MERRITT REFUGE CENTENNIAL

Oakland can join California Conservation Week observances this year by proudly claiming: "We did it first!" The Lake Merritt Waterfowl Refuge, established by the State Legislature in 1870 on March 18th, was the first wildlife refuge declared by any public body or agency in all of North America, as far as we can determine.

The elk herds, grizzlies and free Indians had disappeared only a few decades before this growing city began to spread to the shores of old Laguna Peralta or the marshy North Arm of El Estero de San Antonio. Only the waterfowl still eame in numbers to their ancestral winter home and now careless fowl hunters and poachers were endangering lakeside residents and visitors. Enterprising Mayor Samuel Merritt had gotten the City Counеil to dam this tidal slough and create a lake by 1869; next, he persuaded a loeal legislator to introduee the bill to create a waterfowl refuge—to protect the birds and the people!

Innumerable visitors to Lake Merritt had fed the tamer dueks for years before the new Park Commission ordered regular, official rations for them in 1915. Annual banding of the pintail, widgeon and coots was inaugurated in 1926, through the persuasion of local sportsmen and ornithologists organized by Mr. E. W. Ehman of Piedmont. The spring migration of these duek species throughout Western Canada and Alaska was soon eonfirmed by reeoveries of Lake Merritt bands. It wasn't until the late 1950's and the tragie deereases in pintail and widgeon at Lake Merritt that we shifted our banding emphasis to the diving dueks, mainly the canvasbaek and seaup.

Conservation awareness and edueation, I feel, have been the greater benefits of the Lake Merritt refuge in reeent decades. But we must not overlook the inealeulable dividends in reereation and entertainment—even a form of physieal and mental therapy derived by many citizens—from this year-round attraction which is free to all. We can proudly claim that the sehool tours, the eonservation displays, and the exhortations by the park naturalists to all who gather at the "Duek Pond," have helped to promote or preserve other wildlife refuges, seashores, parks of all types and better understanding of our natural environment.

Meanwhile, defending our own environment of this city lake, the refuge and its shores has presented many challenges—and some defeats. The litter and other pollutants of urban surroundings appear all too graphieally in our "eateh basin" lake. **The precious open spaces of public park land are tempting morsels to planners and developers. If we are to preserve Lake Merritt and the waterfowl refuge without gradual erosion of their natural values, we shall need your help!***

Alaskans have responded to the mounting protests both within and without their state to wolf bounties, to airplane hunts and other violations of modern eonservation ethies. Letters from Dr. Robert Weeden, Sierra Club Alaskan spokesman, and from the Department of Fish and Game

to your Chariman have been most reassuring—promising legislative action. If only that current film *glamourizing* Alaskan big game slaughter had not just hit our theatres! Of course, some of the *reaction* to it may actually help our cause!

Let's look again at Florida, where a storm of nationwide protests caused President Nixon, a Secretary and a Governor to halt a major airport which could have destroyed Everglades National Park. But don't gloat— it was too close a "near-miss." And they did build one runway which means air and water pollution. So, how about getting that out, President Nixon, Secretary Hickel and Governor Kirk?—PAUL F. COVEL, *Conservation Chairman.*

**Editor's Note*: A photo and map of the Lake Merritt Waterfowl Refuge and references to its importance as the "world's first *official* bird sanctuary" were published in *The World of Birds* by James Fisher and Roger Tory Peterson (Doubleday, 1964) p. 139. A photo of Paul Covel showing the duck feeding area to visitors was published in *Birds in Our Lives* by the U.S. Department of the Interior, Alfred Stefferud, Ed., 1966, p. 539.

GOOD NEWS—At the end of January the Oakland planning staff "emphatically rejected" the proposed parking garage in Lakeside Park on Lake Merritt's shore.

MAN'S IMPACT UPON HIS ENVIRONMENT: A GRAPHIC ESSAY

Using slides, two projectors, music and narration, Dr. David Mason, a biologist at U.C. Berkeley, makes an artistic and convincing appeal for changes in man's attitudes toward his environment—an appeal for new directions in the 1970's, when, hopefully, conservationists will see planted in the minds of all Americans the seeds for a reverence toward the Earth and *all* the forms of life that it supports. His message urges a reversal of the destructive activities that have led to environmental deterioration. Conservation takes on a new meaning—survival.

This Golden Gate Audubon Society program will begin at **7:30 p.m., Thursday, March 12,** in the Rotary Natural Science Center, Lakeside Park Bellevue and Perkins, Oakland. Visitors are welcome. A no-host dinner will start at **6:30 p.m.** in Lovely's Buffet, 336 Grand Ave. at Perkins St. —MRS. RICHARD JOHNSON, *Vice President.*

"THE BAHAMAS TOP TO BOTTOM"—MARCH 20

Naturalist-photographer Harry Pederson will bring *The Bahamas—Top to Bottom* to Berkeley on **Friday, March 20, at 8:15 p.m.** in the King Jr. High School Auditorium, Rose St. at Grant. This beautiful, informative film will be the last in the current Audubon Wildlife Film series.

A specialist in undersea photography, Mr. Pederson has supplied footage for the film version of Rachel Carson's *The Sea Around Us*, for *Hunters of the Deep, The Animal World, 20,000 Leagues Under the Sea,*

and *Mysteries of the Deep*, and for Walt Disney documentaries. Single admission at the door is $1.50 for adults and $1 for students under 18. Season tieket holders are invited to bring a guest free.

MARCH-APRIL FIELD TRIPS

Saturday, March 7, a morning trip in Alameda—one of the few remaining nearby areas for shorebirds. Meet at **8 a.m.** at the "sea wall" on the Alameda side of Bay Farm Island bridge. From Otis Dr. turn right at Peaeh St. and park near the sea wall. Leader, Mrs. Elsie Roemer, one of our pioneer eonservationists in saving bay and marsh habitat. (522-0941)
Wednesday, March 11, a wildflower walk to the East Oakland quarry. Meet on Bermuda Ave. off Mountain Blvd. at **9 a.m.** *Bring* knapsaek lunch. Leader, Marshall Jeneks, 534-9353.

Saturday, March 28, above trip will be repeated.

Saturday, April 4, Audubon Canyon Ranch (north of Stinson Beaeh, Marin County) to observe the nesting egrets and herons. This is a good trip for new members and for ehildren. Raneh Naturalist, Clerin Zumwalt, will guide the group first through the museum and nature eenter and then will lead a hike to the overlook. Park at the ranch lot. Meet promptly at **9 a.m.** in front of the fountain. Luneh optional
Saturday, April 18, a joint field trip with Madrone Audubon to the U.C. Bodega Bay Marine Lab for wildflowers and birds. Leader, Riehard Leinbaeh.

Sunday, April 26, annual hardy seafarers' trip *circling* Farallon Islands on the "Blue Horizon" and the "Paul G" for migrating and nesting sea birds. This very popular trip has been featured in *Time* magazine, *San Francisco Examiner* & *Chronicle* and the *New York Times*. Point Reyes Bird Observatory is eondueting extensive researeh on the Southeast Farallon Island. *The boats will Leave at 7 a.m. Daylight Saving Time* and return about 4 p.m. Fare: $10 per person. Make eheek payable to Golden Gate Audubon Soeiety and *please enclose a stamped, self-addressed envelope*. Mail it to Mrs. Valeria G. DaCosta, 2090 Paeifie Ave., San Franeiseo 94109. Details will be sent with aeknowledgment. Reservations will elose **April 15**—or earlier if boats are filled.

Saturday-Sunday, June 6-7, Yosemite field trip. Overnight aeeommodations have been reserved for Golden Gate Audubon for Friday and Saturday, June 5 and 6. Details in the April *Gull*.

Thirty Audubon members attended the Tubbs Island field trip on January 17 to see White-tailed Kites, Marsh Hawks and other marsh birds in this unspoiled Nature Conservaney area on the shore of San Pablo Bay. —MRS. VALERIA G. DaCOSTA, Field Trips Chairman.

NATURE TRAINING NEEDS PICTURES

Looking for a productive use for those wildlife stamps, outdated wildlife film brochures and similar material which you are reluctant to throw away?

One of our community resource volunteers has developed a nature "game" to help children begin to recognize the basic differences and similarities between members of the animal kingdom. This was suggested by a resource book at the Audubon Nature Training Center: *Benny's Animals and How He Put Them in Order* by Millicent E. Selsam.

To take this nature game into the schools, the resource volunteers need many small pictures of members of the animal kingdom—mammals, birds, reptiles, inseets, etc. They can be in black and white or color, and must fit on a 3x5 card. No cartoons, please. It would be very helpful if you would paste them on 3x5 cards before sending them to us. However, we hope to find volunteers to cut and paste. Send them to Audubon Nature Training, P.O. Box 103, Berkeley 94701, care of Aida Brenneis.

Audubon Nature Training has been invited to participate in an all-day panel on teaeher education on **May 17** at the National Audubon Convention in Seattle.

AUDUBON CANYON RANCH

As a result of their receiving from Mrs. Philip H. Pratt a *Summary of the Nesting Successes for Herons and Egrets at Audubon Canyon Ranch During the seasons of* 1967 *Through* 1969,, the Directors of the Ranch adopted a Resolution of Gratitude to Mrs. Pratt in appreeiation of her dedication and adherence to her difficult and trying tasks: regular and unremitting trips over the mountain to pay long visits to the overlook in order to obtain aecurate, sustained data on the birds and nests; and the many hours of work required to correlate her findings in order to reaeh her conclusions. The quality and value of her work have brought scientific recognition to Helen Pratt. She has made a tremendous eontribution to Canyon Ranch by supplying information of vital importance to the future of the heronry.

The Board of Directors of ACR voted at its last meeting to authorize the Point Reyes Bird Observatory to undertake a year-long study of Bolinas Lagoon and to prepare a eheeklist of every bird species using the lagoon, giving abundance, seasonal fluctuation, arrival and departure dates, and area preference in the lagoon. Special studies will be made of the Snowy Egret which has begun to nest in the rookery; of the Blaek-crowned Night Heron which roosts in large numbers around the lagoon; of the Brown Pelican which is in critical decline; and of herons and egrets from the rookery, some of which would be captured, dyed and banded. No activity will take place at the heronry itself;; banding activity will be restricted to non-critical periods. Fred C. Sibley, Director-Biologist of PRBO has had wide experienee in working with large birds. A great deal of volunteer help will be needed, not all of it by experienced birders. Clerin Zumwalt will be in charge of scheduling this help through the ranch office. A preliminary meeting will be called soon by Mr. Sibley. Please, volunteers, call or send a card to Audubon Canyon Ranch, Shoreline Highway, Stinson Beach 94970, phone 868-0563.

Canyon Ranch will need hosts and hostesses to greet the public on weekends from **March 28 to July 5.** This is an essential and pleasant job. To volunteer please write Mrs. Kathy Higgs, 340 Esplanade, Apt. 20 Pacifica 94044.

AUDUBON MEMBERSHIP NEWS

At its December 1969 meeting the Golden Gate Audubon Society board took two major actions on membership.

It approved a new membership category for students—high school and college— which had been recommended by National. The student fee is $6 for full National Audubon and Golden Gate Audubon joint membership. This means that the entire $6 will go to the National, and Golden Gate will absorb the cost of the local membership. (Of a $10 membership, we receive $4 for our own operation and programs.) The board considers the student membership plan an excellent way of bringing more young people into our society, one that should benefit both them and us.

Any bona fide student in high school, college, or graduate school is eligible. Until we have our application form revised, students should note on the application that it is a student membership. The check should be made out to the National Audubon Society but should be sent, along with the application, to the Golden Gate Audubon Society, P. O. Box 103, Berkeley 94701.

Also, if you know young people who would be interested, why not give them a gift of a membership? It's the kind of gift that will provide ongoing pleasure, as well as increasing knowledge and understanding of our natural environment and its needs.

The second action by the board in December was to vote gift memberships to young ecology activist groups in this area. So far, we have given memberships to the Ecology Center, Ecology Information, and Ecology Action. We hope that these groups will find their membership worthwhile and that they will participate actively in Golden Gate and in the Audubon movement.—AILEEN PIERSON, *Membership Chairman.*

BAY AREA AUDUBON COUNCIL is the name of a newly formed group that will meet on a quarterly basis. The next meeting is scheduled for **April 4**. The first item on the agenda in January was the proposed South San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge and the need to get favorable action by Congress on bills H.R. 2749 and S.2291, including funding for the studies still required, according to *The Kite Call.*

THE REYNOLDS TO LEAD AFRICAN TRIP

Dr. Eric and Laurel Reynolds, two well-known Golden Gate Audubon conservationists and birders will lead a group to East Africa **October 1-28.** This will be a wildlife tour with special emphasis on birds. The itinerary includes game parks and reserves in Uganda, Kenya and Tanzania with several unusual lake areas where birdlife abounds. Travel arrangements will be made by Otto Hieb, experienced Travel Consultant of Central Travel Agency in Oakland. Mr. Hieb has just returned from Africa where he made special plans for this tour. Phone 832-2633 or write 918 Central Bldg., 436 - 14th Street, Oakland, CA 94612.

POINT REYES BIRD OBSERVATORY

Point Reyes Bird Observatory can use blue chip or green stamps to obtain offiee equipment. Please send your extra stamps to PRBO, Palomarin Raneh, Mesa Road, Bolinas, CA 94924.

The *PRBO Newsletter* reports that a Golden-crowned Sparrow banded on South Farallon Island on September 28, 1968, was recovered at Monitor, near Salem, Oregon, on April 27, 1969. This was the *first recovery* of a passerine migrant banded on the island. The recovery location is about 510 miles north of the banding location, and "it seems evident that the bird was on a normal northward migration to the breeding ground in Alaska or British Columbia when it flew into an object and died."

OBSERVATIONS CALENDAR

Jan. 19—*Five Knots* on Albany mudflat during census—Homem, Mericourt.
Jan. 20, 22, 25—*Sage Thrasher* still at Alameda South Shore—Bialos, Dements, Homem, Pursell, Roemer, Underhill.
Jan. 24-25—*Black Tern* at Peseadero marsh—Bill Anderson of Fish & Game.
Jan. 31—Three *Hooded Mergansers* on Lafayette Reservoir—Tom Schulenberg.
Feb. 1—*Barrow's Goldeneye* still on Lake Merritt—Tom Schulenberg.
Feb. 3——*Northern Shrike* on Grizzly Island (Solano Co.)—Ruth Dement et al. (Brownish plumage. Faint mask did not reaeh bill.)
Feb. 14—*Harlequin* drake, Tomales Bay—Pursell, Burns.

MEMORIAL GIFTS

Gifts of remembrance were made to **Audubon Nature Training:**

In Memory of	*Gift of*
Phyllis Zweigart	Phyllis Bartelme
Miriam G. Geraghty	Isobel Hamilton

A Gift of remembranee was made to **Audubon Canyon Ranch:**

In Memory of	*Gift of*
A. A. Eustis	Mrs. Ida E. Logan

—DR. ALBERT BOLES, *Sanctuary & Memorial Fund Chairman*

AUDUBON CAMP OF THE WEST, in the Wind River Range of Western Wyoming, will again offer four 2-week sessions from **June 28 to August 21.** The eamp is 60 miles from Grand Teton National Park. Two units of University graduate or upper division credit are available (at extra eost). The eamp fee of $150 includes board, lodging, instruction and all field trip transportation. For further information write Direetor, Audubon Camp of the West, P.O. Box 4446, Saeramento, CA 95825.

"Our civilization is siek. Animals belong on this earth as mueh as we do, maybe even more. Why? Beeause if all our maehines were to break down we would probably all die. We could not live in the wild. We need machines to build our house when an animal could make one twice as good. People shoot an animal, just leave half of it lying there . . . Animals kill only what they need. You may have heard of Wild Bill Hiekoek. I think he should have won the world's dunee cap. He killed a buffalo, took the skin, and left the rest lying there on the ground".—Christopher Wilson, *Age* 9, in a letter to Mrs. Janet Nickelsburg.

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Established January 25, 1917 A Branch of the National Audubon Society since 1948

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Treasurer	Edward Ormondroyd	2736 Russell St., Berkeley 94705	549-1385
Recording Secretary	Mrs. Jane Dang	1292 Grizzly Peak Blvd., Berkeley 94708	848-0253
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Director	Robert E. Conrath	1980 Washington St., San Francisco 94118	776-1418
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Membership Secretary	Mrs. Zella Cushman	3156 Gough, San Francisco 94123	673-5310
Nature Training	Miss Phyllis Lindley	P.O. Box 103, Berkeley 94701	549-1038
Sanctuary & Memorial Fund Chairman	Dr. Albert Boles	854 Longridge Rd., Oakland 94610	451-6267
Wildlife Film Chairman	Mrs. Frances Ellen Fallgatter	406 El Cerrito, Piedmont 94611	655-9582
Conservation Chairman	Paul F. Covel	2860 Delaware St., Oakland 94602	536-4120
Canyon Ranch Film Crmn.	Mrs. Bonnie Smith	555 Dewey Blvd., San Francisco 94116	681-7635

Send address changes to Membership Secretary promptly; Post Office does not forward THE GULL. Monthly meetings second Thursday 7:30 p.m. Joint membership, Local & National $10 per yer, includes AUDUBON MAGAZINE and THE GULL. Subsoription to THE GULL separately $2 per year.

High school & college student membership $6 per year.

The *Gull* deadline is the first of the month for the following month.